

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEGUCI 01304 042212Z

70

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-05 AID-05 /059 W

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FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9652

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 1304

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, MORG, HO

SUBJECT: CURRENT MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 1283

1. THE PRESS CONTINUES TO CARRY STORIES ON CHANGES WITHIN THE HONDURAN MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT. A NUMBER OF PHOTOS HAVE APPEARED SHOWING GENERAL LOPEZ SWEARING IN THE NEW POSITION HOLDERS. IN GENERAL, CHANGES DESCRIBED IN THE PRESS ARE ACCURATE. THE EARLIER SPATE OF SPECULATION IN THE MEDIA ABOUT THE CHANGES HAS CEASED.

2. THE GREATEST DIFFICULTIES SO FAR APPEAR TO BE IN THE AIR FORCE. MISSION CONTACTS HAVE REPORTED THAT AIR FORCE COMMANDER COLONEL ENRIQUE SOTO CANO IS OPPOSED TO BEING MOVED INTO THE POSITION OF MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT AND JUSTICE. REPORTS HAVE IT THAT HE IS "HEEL DRAGGING" ABOUT THE CHANGE. INIMDDITION, AIR FORCE COLONEL JOSE

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PAGE 02 TEGUCI 01304 042212Z

SERRA HERNANDEZ IS RETURNING TO TEGUCIGALPA FROM U.S.

TONIGHT OR TOMORROW AND THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT HE
WILL BACK SOTO CANO.

3. COMMENT: THERE HAS AS YET BEEN NO IN-DEPTH CONSIDER-
ATION OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE CHANGES BY THE VARIOUS
SECTORS OF HONDURAN SOCIETY. IN GREAT PART, THIS IS
BECAUSE THE CHANGES CAME SO SUDDENLY AND NO ONE IS
CERTAIN ABOUT WHAT IT PORTENDS FOR THE FUTURE. IT IS
LIKELY THAT CABINET CHANGES WILL TRIGGER SUCH AN ANALYSIS.

4. THE CAPITAL AND COUNTRY REMAIN QUIET AND THERE HAVE
BEEN NO UNUSUAL TROOP MOVEMENTS REPORTED. EXCEPT FOR THE AIR
FORCE, THE SITUATION WITHIN THE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT
COULD BEST BE DESCRIBED AS CALM. IT DOES NOT APPEAR THAT
THE ATTITUDE OF SOTO CANO WILL CAUSE A DIVISION WITHIN
THE ARMED FORCES OR LEAD TO FIGHTING. A SOLUTION PROBABLY WILL BE
NEGOTIATED. THE SUPERIOR DEFENSE COUNCIL WILL MEET IN THE
NEAR FUTURE TO DEAL WITH ADJUSTMENTS WITHIN THE MILITARY ESTAB-
LISHMENT AND TO MAKE OTHER CABINET
AND GOVERNMENT CHANGES.
SANCHEZ

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